BLACK CAT

MARVEL

9

RATED T+

WILSON
MELNIKOV
REBER

LISTEN. I'M AWARE OF MY *FAULTS.*

I'M A *THIEF.* THIEVES, BY DEFINITION, WANT THE THINGS THEY DON'T *HAVE.*

EVEN THINGS THEY *KNOW* WILL CAUSE THEM *TERRIBLE* PROBLEMS LATER ON.

SO A THIEF'S *STRENGTH* IS THE SAME AS THEIR *WEAKNESS.*

THEY'RE *REALLY* GOOD AT GETTING THEIR HANDS ON THINGS *NOBODY* ELSE CAN REACH.

BUT A LOT OF THOSE THINGS ARE OUT OF REACH FOR A *REASON.*

SOMETIMES, GETTING YOUR HANDS ON THEM MEANS YOU END UP IN A JAIL CELL OR, WORSE, ON A *HIT LIST.*

AND SOMETIMES, IT MEANS YOU GET SUCKED INTO A REALITY-BENDING *ARTIFACT* SOMEBODY STASHED IN A SECRET VAULT INSIDE THE *NEGATIVE ZONE.*

WHICH IS *EXACTLY* WHAT HAPPENED TO ME AND *MJ* WHEN I DECIDED TO STEAL THE *SIEGE PERILOUS.*

DO SOMETHING, FELICIA!

I *CAN'T*-- IT'S SUCKING US IN!

HOLD ON TO MY HAND!

I'M TRYING!

CAN'T-- THE SYMBIOTE-- GET US *OUT* OF HERE--?

I CAN'T-- *FEEL* THE SYMBIOTE--I CAN'T--FEEL *ANYTHING*--

I'M NOT GONNA *LIE*: WE WERE IN A *BAD SPOT.*

AND IT WAS *MOSTLY* MY FAULT.

MJ?!

FELICIA!

SOMETIMES, *FATE* JUST CATCHES YOU OUT LIKE THAT.

AAAH!

ONE *BAD DECISION* LATER, YOUR LIFE IS *COMPLETELY* DIFFERENT.

FELICIA HARDY is the **BLACK CAT**, the world's slyest and most skilled super-thief! Armed with her luck-altering abilities, there's no heist she can't pull off. The longer the odds, the better!

BLACK CAT

IX. STRING THEORY

The BLACK CAT recently tried to change her stripes to become a super hero...and incurred the wrath of Spider-Man's rogues' gallery (and pretty much everyone else in New York City). She was about to turn her luck around when VENOM paid her a visit. Once Felicia's shock at learning that the symbiote was bonded to MARY JANE WATSON subsided...she agreed to aid them--by stealing something of incredible value from a supernatural vault deep in the Negative Zone! But upon reaching the vault, Felicia just couldn't help herself to some extra loot in the form of the Siege Perilous!

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AAAAAAAA--

IN THE MOST LITERAL SENSE.

--AAAAH!

OOF!

THUD!

OH MY GOD! ARE YOU OKAY?

I...I DON'T KNOW.

WHAT THE--?

WHERE AM I? WHAT AM I WEARING?

WHAT *YEAR* IS THIS?!

LISTEN, I THINK YOU MIGHT HAVE HIT YOUR *HEAD*--

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT--THE *SIEGE PERILOUS*--IT MUST HAVE DUMPED ME OUT SOMEWHERE IN THE *PAST*--

MAYBE WE SHOULD CALL AN *AMBULANCE.*

BUT I *IGNORED* HIM.

NO AMBULANCE-- AN AMBULANCE CAN'T *HELP* ME NOW--

I WAS LOOKING *DESPERATELY* FOR A FAMILIAR FACE.

I *KNEW* I WAS IN NEW YORK. I KNEW I WAS IN *CENTRAL PARK.*

WHICH MEANT THERE MUST BE *SOMEBODY* AROUND I'D *MET* BEFORE.

EMPIRE STATE UNIVERSITY

...NO WAY.

AND THEN I *SAW* HIM.

PETER PARKER.

DID YOU JUST SAY MY NAME?

STROLLING AROUND WITHOUT A *CARE* IN THE WORLD, AND STILL YOUNG ENOUGH TO GET *ZITS.*

PETER! THANK GOD!

HUH?!

HEY, *WHOA*-- HAVE WE *MET?*

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN,* "HAVE WE MET?"

IT'S ME. *FELICIA.*

CRAP. MAYBE WE *HAVEN'T* MET YET. IT'S STILL *SUPER* EARLY.

YOU PROBABLY HAVEN'T EVEN GOTTEN TOGETHER WITH *MJ* YET.

MJ?

YOU MEAN... *MARY JANE WATSON?*

OF *COURSE* I MEAN MARY JANE WATSON. WHAT *OTHER* KIND OF MJ IS THERE?

WELL, THE ONLY MARY JANE WATSON I KNOW WOULD *NEVER* DATE A GUY LIKE ME.

SHE'S WAY TOO *FAMOUS.*

THERE SHE WAS.

IN FACT, THAT'S WHY WE'RE ALL *HERE.*

ON A *STAGE,* GLOWING IN THE SUNLIGHT, DOING %#$&#$ *SHAKESPEARE IN THE PARK.*

...MJ?!

SHE'S REALLY *SOMETHING,* ISN'T SHE?

UNCLE BEN SAYS SHE JUST GOT SOME KIND OF MULTIMILLION-DOLLAR FILM DEAL IN *HOLLYWOOD.*

BUT *HOW?*

I MEAN, SHE'S TRYING HER BEST, BUT SHE'S JUST NOT THAT *GOOD...*

SHE'S GOT ONE OF THOSE *FACES,* I GUESS. THE CAMERA *LOVES* HER.

HEY, NERD! YOU MADE IT!

HEY, GUYS! GOOD TO SEE YA--

WHAT IN THE WORLD?!

FLASH. GWEN. ALIVE. SMILING.

I THOUGHT YOU WERE GONNA STAY HOME AND *STUDY!*

WHO'S YOUR *DATE?* I DON'T THINK WE'VE *MET...*

MAYBE I REALLY *HAD* HIT MY HEAD.

YOU LOOK LIKE A MILLION BUCKS, THOMPSON!

YEAH, YEAH, YEAH. FLATTERY'LL GET YOU *NOWHERE,* NERD.

I KNEW IT COULDN'T POSSIBLY BE *REAL.*

AND I HAD TO FIND A WAY BACK TO WHAT *WAS* REAL.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU. YOU'RE TOO KIND.

CLAP CLAP CLAP CLAP

MJ! HEY!

MJ!

FELICIA! YOU'RE *HERE!*

WHAT THE HELL IS GOING *ON?!*

I DON'T REALLY *UNDERSTAND* IT, BUT I THINK THE *SIEGE PERILOUS* SENT US BACK IN TIME--

WELL, I CAN *SEE* THAT! BUT THIS *ISN'T* HOW THINGS ACTUALLY HAPPENED!

YOU'RE RIGHT. IT'S *BETTER.*

WHAT DO YOU *MEAN?!*

LOOK AT THEM! EVERYONE'S HAPPY! EVERYONE'S *ALIVE!*

NOBODY GOT BITTEN BY A RADIOACTIVE *SPIDER.* NO ONE'S BEEN *MURDERED.* NO ONE HAS TO PUT ON A COSTUME AND *SUFFER.*

MAYBE THIS IS A *SECOND CHANCE,* FELICIA. A CHANCE TO LIVE OUR LIVES THE WAY THEY WERE *MEANT* TO BE LIVED.

WITHOUT BEING TIED TO ALL THE *MISTAKES* WE'VE MADE.

I DUNNO, MJ. I FEEL MORE THAN CAPABLE OF MAKING A WHOLE *NEW* SET OF MISTAKES.

BUT SEEING *MJ* UP THERE, LIVING OUT HER *DREAM*...NO DIVORCES, NO EMBARRASSING AUDITION TAPES... IT WAS TEMPTING TO *AGREE.*

AND THE THOUGHT OF LIVING A LIFE IN WHICH I COULD *CHOOSE* WHAT I WANTED TO BE WAS *ALSO* NICE, TO BE HONEST!

I GUESS THE GRASS REALLY IS ALWAYS GREENER ON THE OTHER SIDE...OF THE *SIEGE PERILOUS.*

SO I *AGREED.*

I AGREED *NOT* TO TRY TO ESCAPE TO THE WORLD WE LEFT BEHIND.

MAYBE MJ WAS *RIGHT.*

AND BESIDES, WHOSE LIFE IS SO *PERFECT* THAT THEY WOULDN'T SAY NO TO A *DO-OVER?*

AT FIRST, THINGS WERE *GREAT.*

PETER AND I FELL *HARD* FOR EACH OTHER.

AGAIN.

AND WITHOUT ANY *SPIDER-COMPLICATIONS,* MJ GOT TO LIVE HER BEST LIFE AS A *HOLLYWOOD STARLET.*

THE *GREEN GOBLIN* NEVER MURDERED ANYBODY. PETER NEVER HAD TO PUT ON A *MASK.*

MJ WATSON RETURNS!

LIFE WAS GOOD.

LIFE WAS *GREAT,* ACTUALLY.

I'D ALWAYS WONDERED WHAT IT WOULD BE *LIKE.*

TO HAVE AN *ORDINARY* LIFE, I MEAN. AND DO YOU KNOW WHAT I FOUND OUT?

IT'S A *BEAUTIFUL* THING.

YOU SHOULD NEVER *BELITTLE* ORDINARY LIFE. IT'S GETTING HARDER AND *HARDER* TO COME BY. WHICH ACTUALLY MEANS IT ISN'T ORDINARY AT ALL. IT'S *EXTRAORDINARY.*

AND FINDING *SUCCESS* AT A JOB YOU *LOVE?* THAT'S PRETTY *EXTRAORDINARY* TOO.

THANK YOU, THANK YOU--IT'S AN *HONOR* TO BE NOMINATED--

BUT *AGE* COMES FOR EVERYONE.

I'M SORRY, MJ. THEY WENT WITH A *YOUNGER* ACTRESS. THEY JUST DON'T THINK YOU'VE GOT THE STAR POWER TO PULL OFF A *LEAD ROLE* ANYMORE.

CHILDREN GROW UP AND *LEAVE* YOU. SOMETIMES NOT VERY *NICELY.*

PLEASE JUST *TALK* TO ME--

YOU DON'T *UNDERSTAND* ME, MOM. YOU'VE *NEVER* UNDERSTOOD ME.

THIS IS *REAL* LIFE, AFTER ALL. AND IN REAL LIFE, NOBODY GETS TO OUTRUN *DISAPPOINTMENT.*

IT'S SO NICE TO SEE YOU AGAIN AFTER ALL THESE YEARS, MJ. YOU'RE STILL *GORGEOUS.*

OH, STOP IT.

HOW'D THAT *AUDITION* GO?

I *DIDN'T* GET THE PART. THEY WENT WITH A 22-YEAR-OLD I'VE NEVER HEARD OF. SAID SHE WOULD APPEAL TO A *WIDER DEMOGRAPHIC.*

HOW ARE THE *KIDS?*

THEY NEVER *CALL* ANYMORE--EXCEPT TO ASK FOR *MONEY.*

AND GETTING A *CAREER* OFF THE GROUND AFTER SO MANY YEARS OF BEING A STAY-AT-HOME MOM HASN'T BEEN *EASY.*

DO YOU EVER *MISS* IT?

OUR LIVES, I MEAN? IN SPITE OF ALL THE *HEARTACHE* AND LOSS AND MISSED CHANCES?

YES! EVERY DAY!

ME TOO! I WAS AFRAID TO *SAY* ANYTHING, SINCE IT WAS *ME* WHO TALKED YOU INTO THIS MESS--

I'VE BEEN *WAITING* FOR YOU TO ASK! I WISH WE HADN'T GIVEN UP OUR *OLD* LIVES SO *EASILY.* I'D GIVE ANYTHING TO HAVE A *REAL ADVENTURE--*

AND WITH THAT, THE *BOTTOM* FELL OUT OF THE WORLD.

AAAAH!

AAAAH!

JUST AS IT HAD SO MANY YEARS EARLIER.

AND WHEN THE LIGHT FADED, WE FOUND OURSELVES ON AN *ADVENTURE*, ALL RIGHT.

WHOMP!

WAY, *WAY* TOO MUCH ADVENTURE, ACTUALLY.

MOVE! WE GOTTA CLEAR THE AREA-- *STAT!*

THE *ROBO-DROIDS* WILL BE HERE ANY SECOND!

WHAT--? WHEN--? WHERE ARE WE *NOW?!*

YOU'RE ASKING *ME?!*

PTEW

PTEW

PTEW

PTEW PTEW PTEW PTEW PTEW

GO FASTER, GO *FASTER!*

HOW ARE WE SUPPOSED TO *RUN* IN THESE THINGS?!

IF WE EVER GET *OUT* OF THIS, I *WILL NEVER* COMPLAIN ABOUT MY LIFE EVER AGAIN, I *SWEAR--*

BEING A *THIEF* WAS WAY EASIER THAN BEING SOME KIND OF *MECH-WARRIOR!*

AND WAY, *WAY* EASIER THAN BEING A *MOM!*

PTEW PTEW PTEW

COME *ON!*

IF WE DON'T MAKE IT TO THE BATTERY PARK SAFE ZONE, WE'RE *DEAD!*

PTEW
PTEW
PTEW
UGH!
THUD!
PTEW
PTEW
PTEW
MJ! NO!
JUST--GO ON *WITHOUT* ME. I CAN'T MOVE IN THIS STUPID *SUIT*--
YOU DON'T GET TO BE THE NOBLE SELF-SACRIFICING HERO TODAY, WATSON! LET'S GO!
WHAT IF THIS IS IT, FELICIA?
WHAT IF WE'RE *STUCK* IN DUELING TIMELINES FOREVER? WHAT IF THERE'S NO *ESCAPE*?
I CAN HELP WITH THAT!

SORRY IF I STARTLED YOU.

I'VE SPENT THE LAST *THIRTY ALTERNATE YEARS* WONDERING HOW YOUR STORY WAS GONNA TURN OUT!

I'M REALLY *INVESTED* NOW.

WHAT--WHAT *ARE* YOU? YOU SOUND LIKE THE A.I. ASSISTANT ON MY *PHONE*--

THEY CALL ME *SINGULARITY!* I'M A POCKET UNIVERSE.

WHO CARES ABOUT NAMES--CAN YOU GET US *OUT* OF HERE?!

AND MISS THE BATTLE OF NEW NUCLEAR MANHATTAN? NO WAY--

KABOOM

PLEASE! WE HAVE TO GET BACK TO OUR *ORIGINAL* TIMELINE BEFORE WE GET *BLOWN UP* IN THIS ONE!

WE'VE MADE A *TERRIBLE* MISTAKE! WE'LL NEVER COMPLAIN ABOUT OUR *OLD* LIVES AGAIN...

WELL... WHEN YOU PUT IT *THAT* WAY...

PROMISE TO COME HANG OUT WITH ME IN YOUR *ALTERNATE TIMELINES* AGAIN SOMEDAY?

IT GETS KINDA *LONELY* WHEN YOU'RE THE ONLY ONE EXPERIENCING STUFF THAT DOESN'T HAPPEN...

SURE, KID-- *ANYTHING* YOU WANT--JUST GET US *OUT* OF HERE--

GREAT! FOLLOW ME!

HOLD ON TIGHT!

WAIT, WHAT'S HAPPENING *NOW*--?

WE'RE JUST GOING BACK THE SAME WAY YOU CAME--

--THROUGH THAT ***DOOR THINGY*** IN THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

I THINK I'M GONNA ***THROW UP!***

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WANTED TO LEAVE ***RIGHT AWAY!***

I'M ***SORRY,*** FELICIA. THIS WHOLE THING WAS ***MY*** FAULT--

IT ***WASN'T*** YOUR FAULT-- I WAS THE ONE WHO DECIDED TO STEAL THE ***SIEGE PERILOUS!***

WELL ***WHOEVER'S*** FAULT IT WAS, I'M ***DONE*** COMPLAINING ABOUT MY LIFE--EVEN IF THAT AUDITION TAPE ***DOES*** GET OUT AND I ***NEVER*** ACT AGAIN--

WHOOSH!

WHOOOAA!

FROM NOW ON, STAY AWAY FROM *WEIRD MIRRORS*, OKAY?

BYE-BYE!

...MY *BRAIN* HURTS.

WHY DID IT SPIT ME OUT AS THE *SYMBIOTE*?!

I NEED A *SHOWER*.

I HATE THE NEGATIVE ZONE.

WE DON'T NEED A *WEIRD MIRROR* TO CHANGE OUR LIVES, OKAY?

EVERY DAY IS ANOTHER OPPORTUNITY TO DO THE *RIGHT THING*.

MJ...IF I'VE EVER *HURT* YOU OR SAID SOMETHING *STUPID* OR DONE ANYTHING TO MAKE YOUR LIFE MORE COMPLICATED, OUT OF *JEALOUSY* OR SPITE OR--OR--

YOU DON'T HAVE TO *SAY* IT.

PLINK—

WAIT A MINUTE. WHO WAS *THAT?*

WHAT WAS *WHAT?*

IT'S--

--IT *IS* HIM!

I CAN'T BELIEVE IT!

BUT IT *WAS* HIM.

J. JONAH JAMESON-- IN THE FLESH.

AND WHEN A GUY LIKE *THAT* SHOWS UP AT THE *SAME* SECRET HIGH-SECURITY SELF-STORAGE FACILITY IN THE *NEGATIVE ZONE* WHERE *YOU* HAPPEN TO BE?

IT'S ALMOST NEVER A *COINCIDENCE.*

NEXT: BIG IF TRUE

SPIDERS & SYMBIOTES

THE GRONE-ZONE

SYMBIOTES & CARNAGES & TORMENTS, OH MY!

This April, the final chapters of DEATH SPIRAL are upon us through the pages of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN and VENOM! If you thought Peter, MJ, and Eddie were in dire straights before—words cannot prepare you for what villains Torment and Carnage will unleash throughout the climactic issues to come. We've nearly reached the center of Torment's spiral of death and destruction. Not everyone is walking away from this one, and by the finale—ASM #27—Spider-Man, backed into the very last corner and out of options...does the unthinkable! To cap it all off—a very special (and terrifying) epilogue issue all about Torment's origins arrives at your local comic shop in May: ASM/VENOM: DEATH SPIRAL – BODY COUNT!

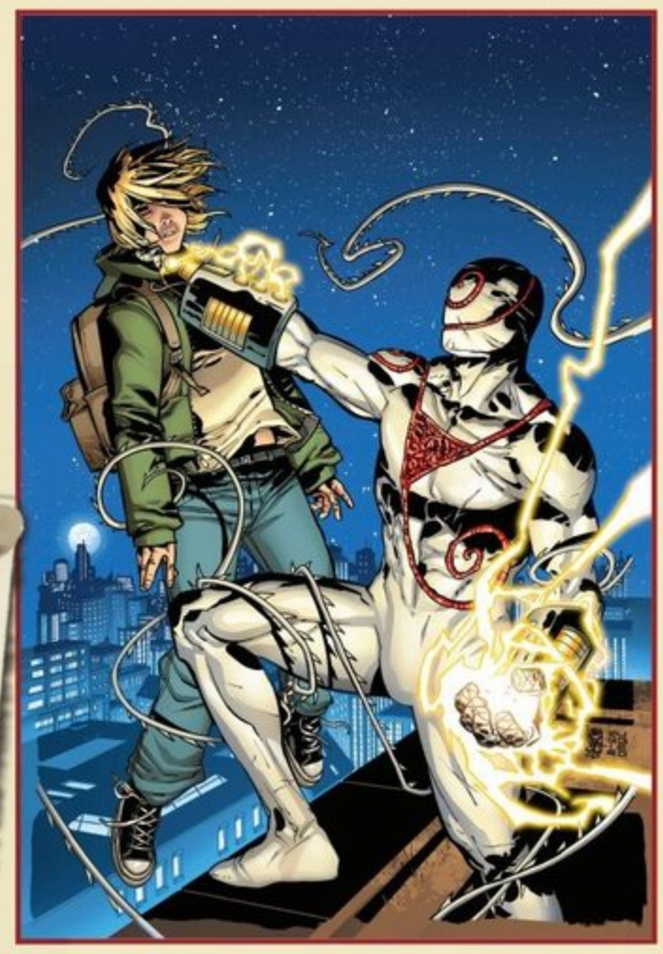
And don't miss the next great Spider-Epic spinning out of the pages of AMAZING SPIDER-MAN. Miles, Gwen, and all your favorite Spider-Heroes enroll in SPIDER-VERSITY—where they will be tested and trained like never before by the GREEN GOBLIN himself!

It's thwip to be square!

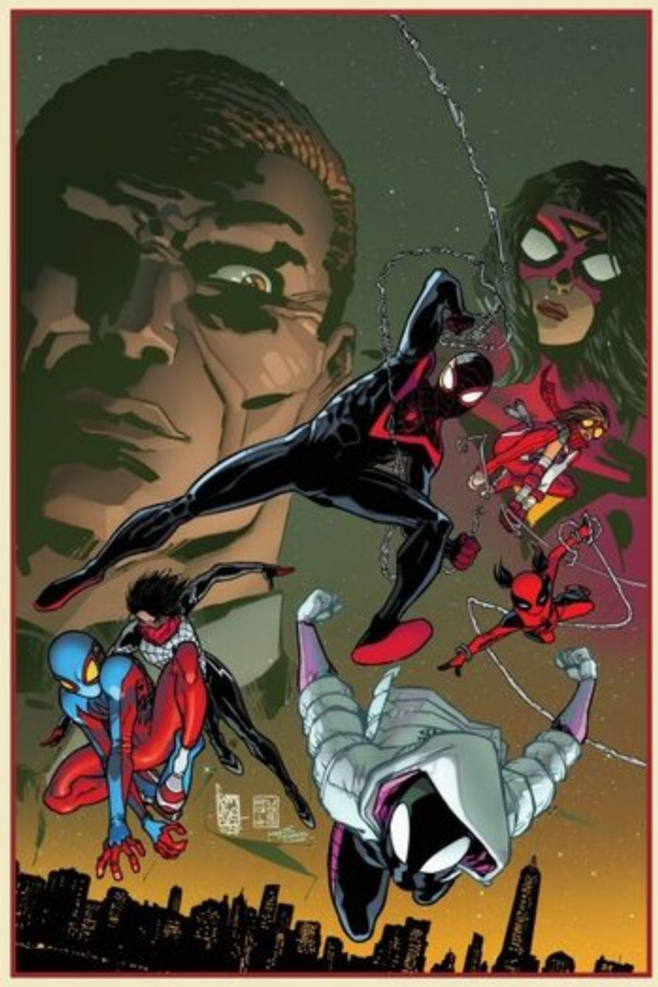
Tommy G

THWIP-LIST

- ❑ ALIEN: KING KILLER #1
- ❑ ALL-NEW SPIDER-GWEN: THE GHOST-SPIDER #9
- ❑ VENOM #256



- ❑ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #26
- ❑ BLACK CAT #9
- ❑ KNULL #4
- ❑ WEB OF VENOM #1
- ❑ INFERNAL HULK #6
- ❑ PLANET OF THE APES VS. FANTASTIC FOUR #3
- ❑ VENOM #257
- ❑ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN #27
- ❑ AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: SPIDER-VERSITY #1



- ❑ HULK: SMASH EVERYTHING #5
- ❑ PLANET SHE-HULK #6
- ❑ PREDATOR: BLOODSHED #3

THIS MONTH'S HOST

NAME: Stephanie Phillips

TITLE: Writer

WORKS ON:
DAREDEVIL, SPIDER-GWEN, PLANET SHE-HULK

WHO IS YOUR IRL SUPER HERO?

Méret Oppenheim. She was an artist who used surrealism to expose how the female body and domestic objects are fetishized, turning them into something unsettling and confrontational. Her work is completely fearless, despite how much it scared her audience.

WHICH SPIDER-MAN VILLAIN DO YOU MOST RESONATE WITH?

Mysterio. Always the storyteller, forever dramatic.

IF YOU COULD GIVE YOUR YOUNGER SELF ONE PIECE OF ADVICE, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Stop saving those clothes for a braver version of yourself. Wear them now.

EMERALD BENSADOUN, **KAITLYN LINDTVEDT** & **KAEDEN McGAHEY** - Assistant Editors
MARTIN BIRO & **TOM GRONEMAN** - Associate Editors **JORDAN D. WHITE** - Senior Editor
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PANEL OF THE MONTH:

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: SPIDER-VERSITY #1
page 6, panel 5
art by PERE PÉREZ

EDGE OF THE VARIANT-VERSE

We in the Spider-Office are no strangers to variants—we've got a Spider-Verse full of 'em. It's hard to narrow it down, but check out our favorite variant covers of the month.

WEB OF VENOM #1
Variant Cover by PERE PÉREZ

GAMMA CORNER

THE HELLBUSTER ARMOR IS UNLEASHED

Take a trip to the Burning City, as Earth's heroes make a desperate assault on the Infernal Hulk's stronghold. But will Iron Man's new HELLBUSTER armor, crafted from angelic weaponry, be enough to turn the tide?!

INFERNAL HULK #6
On sale 4/15

NEXT

MELNIKOV 2026

delgado

#10

ON SALE: 5/13/26